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COVID VACCINE 90% EFFECTIVE IN PHASE 3 TRIALS, SAYS PFIZER

The US drugmaker said on Monday its vaccine candidate BNT162b2 was found to be more than 90% effective in preventing Covid-19 in its first interim efficacy analysis, which looked at 94 infections in nearly 44,000 volunteers

EFFECTIVE 7 DAYS AFTER SECOND DOSE

Protection in patients was achieved seven days after the second of two doses, and 28 days after the first. "We are a significant step closer to providing a much-needed breakthrough to help bring an end to this global health crisis," Pfizer Chairman and CEO Albert Bourla said. Pfizer said it doesn't plan to stop its study until it records 164 infections among all the volunteers —a number that experts agree is enough to tell how well the vaccine is working. The company cautioned that the effectiveness rate may change as the study progresses

WHAT U.S. RULES SAY

According to the US Food and Drug Administration regulations, any vaccine candidate must be at least 50% effective to secure its approval

PLANS TO FILE EMERGENCY USE APPLICATION

- Pfizer said it will file an emergency use application with the US regulators this month. Along with BioNTech, it plans to make enough shots to cover 15-20 million people by the end of 2020
- However, more clarity is needed on how long its effects last, and if it protects the elderly as well as younger people
- The Phase 3 trials began in July, and of the 43,538 participants enrolled, 38,955 have received a second dose as of Sunday
- Pfizer and BioNTech said they expect to supply up to 50 million vaccine doses globally in 2020, and up to 1.3 billion in 2021 | P16

4.4%

JUMP IN DOW JONES INDUSTRIAL AVERAGE ON MONDAY SOON AFTER PFIZER'S ANNOUNCEMENT. THE BROADER S&P500 ROSE 3.0 PER CENT TO 3,615.71, BEATING ITS SEPTEMBER 2 CLOSING RECORD

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The locked JD(U) headquarters (L) on Bir Chand Patel Marg in Patna and some activity outside and within the RJD's office on the same stretch on Monday | RANJIT K DEY

RJD buoyant as decision day dawns

Locked gates at JD(U) and BJP offices indicate the mood ahead of vote counting today

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @Patna

IF activity in the offices of political parties is anything to go by, then the Rashtriya Janata Dal should breast the tape when the votes for the Bihar elections are counted on Tuesday.

"Munna aao, kal ladoo milega tum ko bhi (Munna come, you will also get ladoo tomorrow)," a party worker could be heard telling a daily-wage labourer at the RJD head office located on Bir Chand Patel Marg.

At gate number 2 of the office, sundry persons are engaged in conversations ranging from the SUVs next to them to the exit polls projecting an advantage for the RJD. Inside, a group of party workers appear upbeat.

"Our party president Jagdanand Singh had come on Sunday for a while. Other senior leaders are either taking rest or camping in their constituencies," said Narendra Rai, an RJD worker.

Party spokesperson Chitranjan Gagan said, "If the exit poll predictions come true, the RJD-led alliance will form the government. You can see the (election) results on the faces of NDA leaders, all of them are despondent."

A stone's throw away on the same road is the Janata Dal (United) and the Bharatiya Janata Party offices. The gates are locked and neither is there any party worker nor any *neta* (leader). There has hardly been any activity since voting ended on November 7, the gate keepers said.

"Abhi kyon aayngе? Sab apne chhetra mein hain, jeet nischit hai (Why should they come now? All are camping in their constituencies till counting and victory is certain," said a man exiting the JD(U) office, a clutch of papers in hand. Ramesh Kumar, a tea-seller next to the BJP office, said after the exit polls projected a not-so positive result, no senior leader had visited the office.

While the RJD could be more optimistic, it is not reflected in the *ladoo* barometer. Sweet shop owners near the party offices had not received any order for ladoos till evening. P10

Vivek co-chairs Biden's Covid team

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

IN one of the first decisions taken by Joe Biden, Indian-American Vivek Murthy was on Monday named one of the three co-chairs of a 13-member Covid-19 Advisory Board that will help the President-elect deal with the coronavirus pandemic raging across the US.

The other two co-chairs are David Kessler, a former Food and Drug Administration commissioner, and Marcella Nunez-Smith, a professor at Yale University. Dr Murthy served as the 19th Surgeon General of the US from 2014 to 2017. The virus has already killed over 236,000 Americans.

Interestingly, the board includes Rick Bright, a former Trump administration whistleblower who was demoted for internally criticising the pandemic response. He had also contested Trump's championing of hydroxychloroquine, a malaria drug, as Covid treatment despite its unproven efficacy. Bright subsequently resigned and filed a whistleblower complaint saying his early warnings over the pandemic were ignored.

Trump is under pressure to work on the transfer of power, but the General Services Administration, that is meant to begin the transition, has not started the process yet.

Border deadlock may be new normal: Expert

BALA CHAUHAN @Bengaluru

The border row has not de-escalated despite several rounds of talks | PTI

THE deadlock between India and China in eastern Ladakh continues, with the eighth round of talks between senior military commanders from both sides failing to achieve any breakthrough. The more than six-month-long standoff between the two giant Asian neighbours "could be the new normal," according to well-known author, historian and Tibetologist Claude Arpi.

In an exclusive interview with *The New Indian Express*, Arpi said that he does not see any thawing of the deadlock "till at least the end of the winter, if not beyond that. It may be a permanent (perhaps on a smaller scale). A new normal. It is difficult for Xi Jinping to publicly lose face and go back to the April position."

"The most pressing issue for India is to hold its position in Ladakh and not go for any type of compromise," he added.

Arpi warned about China's hidden agenda behind the development of around 200 Xiaokangs (moderately well off villages), most of which are located all along the Indian border from Rutok in Ngari Prefecture in the West to Rima (opposite Kibithu) in the Lohit valley in the East.

"Since May this year, we have understood that China wants to stabilise and control its borders with India, to have a safe base for its military operations. The development of these strategic villages is a crucial way to govern the borders and has serious implications for India's defence," he pointed out.

Arpi also spoke about the "definitive plans" of the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) on the "15th Dalai Lama to be re-born in China. "Beijing is planning to appropriate the reincarnation process," he added.

FULL INTERVIEW: P7

Cracker ban in Delhi, curbs in other cities

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@New Delhi

THE National Green Tribunal on Monday imposed a total ban on the sale and use of firecrackers in Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR), where air quality has dipped to dangerously low levels, from November 9 midnight till November 30.

The ban has been imposed ahead of Diwali to prevent further rise in air pollution. The NGT said the ban will be applicable to all cities where the average ambient air quality in November last year was poor.

'Green' crackers will be allowed in cities with moderate air quality, but usage will be restricted to two hours, which will be decided the states. "If nothing is specified, the timing will be 8-10 pm on Diwali and Gurupurb, 6 am-8 am on Chhatt and 11.55 pm-12.30 am during Christmas and New Year's eve," the order reads.

For other areas with better air quality, the NGT made the cracker ban optional, but directed states to initiate special drives to contain air pollution in view of Covid-19.

Covid-19 test now must to attend college

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

DEGREE and post-graduate students and their teachers opting for regular classes in their respective colleges from November 17 onwards will have to get a Covid-19 negative certificate. The students will also have to get a written consent from their parents for letting them attend classes in person.

These are some of the standard operating protocols (SOPs) released by the State Government on Monday in preparation for offline classes for degree and postgraduate courses. However, while colleges will now open their doors, the government has not restricted online classes, although those who opt for online classes will have contact classes for solving their doubts.

While masks are mandatory for all, the teaching faculty are advised to wear masks as well as face shields. Up to 50 per cent of students can be asked to come to classrooms per batch on a rotational basis decided by the colleges.

CONTINUED ON: P7

ISRAEL, AUSTRALIA KEEN ON SPACE TIE-UPS WITH INDIA

PEARL MARIA D'SOUZA
@Bengaluru

THE Bengaluru Tech Summit (BTS), although online this year, is witnessing an increased interest in space sector collaborations.

At least three of the global innovation alliance partner countries — Australia, Israel, and Sweden — have already expressed interest to collaborate on the space front, with the latter looking to participate in Shukrayaan-I, India's mission to Venus.

Consul General of Israel in Bengaluru, Jonathan Zadka, told The New Indian Express that collaborations at the BTS this year will be besides their regular engagements. "We are looking at collaborations in innovations in non-space technology that have space applications," he said. This includes Aleph Farms, a food tech startup and a global leader in the cultivated meat industry that has already cultivated steaks in 2019 for the International Space Station, using minimal resources.

Zadka said the Israel space agency had tasted success when they applied Aleph Farm's artificial food for space use. "It is sustainable for long space missions," he added.

CONTINUED ON: P2

EXPRESS READ

Nearly 50% of state had Covid by Aug: Study

New Delhi: A private serosurvey conducted between mid-June and August has found that approximately 31.5 million of Karnataka's residents, translating to 46.7 per cent of the population, were infected with the novel coronavirus by August itself. P3

Son of ex-minister detained in drug case

Bengaluru: Former Karnataka minister Rudrappa Lamani's son, Darshan Lamani, has been 'detained' for allegedly harbouring two people wanted in connection with the procurement of drugs through 'darknet', police said. P5

No HC relief for Arnab, approaches lower court

Mumbai: The Bombay High Court on Monday declined to grant interim bail to Republic TV Editor-in-Chief Arnab Goswami and two others. Before the HC ruling, Goswami filed a bail application in the Alibaug sessions court. P10

FAMILY FIRST

Paternity break for Kohli, Rohit in Test squad

VENKATA KRISHNA B @Chennai

THE concept of going on paternity leave among cricketers in India is rare. But times are changing and with it, preferences of players. The BCCI granted India captain Virat Kohli, a batsman the team will need the most in Australia, paternity leave on Monday. He will return from Adelaide after the first Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy starting on December 17 to be present alongside his wife Anushka Sharma. They are expecting the birth of their first child around the New Year. Kohli had informed his plans during the selection committee meeting.

"Considering the long rigorous tours players go through, it is important to be with their family when it matters the most. The birth of your first child is always precious," is how former selection committee chairman MSK Prasad explained. "Paternity leave is not

part of BCCI's written policy, but is considered on humanitarian grounds." During India's Australia tour in 2017-18, Prasad-led panel granted similar leave to Rohit Sharma. The Mumbai Indians skipper, who was ignored for the Aussie tour due to hamstring injury, has been named only for Tests as he will not be fit for T20s and ODIs. He, however, is set to lead MI against Delhi Capitals in IPL final on Tuesday.

In fact, Australian Cricket Board is the first board to have a policy of 12-month paid maternity leave and three weeks of paternity leave in October 2019.

IPL final MI vs DC, 7.30 PM P15

In case of a joint deposit account, the nominee's right arises only after the death of all account holders
Ishan Kishan
Cricketer & RBI Employee
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